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Disarmament Commission

310th meeting

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New York

Chair: Mr. Al Bayati (Iraq)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Opening of the session

The Chair: I declare open the 2011 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

Before we take up the first item of the day, on behalf of all the members of the Commission, allow me to extend my sincere gratitude to Mr. Shaaban Shaaban, Under-Secretary-General of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, which is responsible for servicing the Disarmament Commission, as well as to Mr. Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and head of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, which will provide substantive support to the Commission's session.

The presence of Mr. Duarte, a widely respected diplomat, once again underlines the importance of the Disarmament Commission, in general, and Member States' high expectations of this session, in particular. It gives me special pleasure to give the floor to Mr. Sergio Duarte.

Mr. Duarte (High Representative for Disarmament Affairs): I am honoured to address the Disarmament Commission as it opens its 2011 substantive session. I wish to commend its departing Chairman, Ambassador Jean-François Régis Zinsou, for his competent stewardship of the work of the Commission last year, as well as to recognize with appreciation the many efforts of the Bureau last year. I also wish to congratulate Ambassador Hamid Al Bayati

on his recent election as the new Chair. The Office for Disarmament Affairs stands ready to assist you, Sir, the members of the Bureau and all delegations during this session.

The Commission is commencing its substantive work today in an international environment that is evolving before our eyes. Many developments open possibilities for new progress in addressing the challenges posed by weapons of mass destruction and conventional arms that the world community has long faced. Yet many other developments raise concerns that multilateral efforts to meet those challenges will give way to other alternatives. At best, those could include limited gestures by like-minded States to plant the seeds of future multilateral norms. At worst, they could lead to the desperate pursuit of security through armed self-help.

The institutions of the United Nations disarmament machinery, including the Disarmament Commission as its deliberative body, are intended to be useful to Member States in achieving their common goals. Yet the ultimate responsibility for the fate of disarmament initiatives lies at the doorsteps of Member States, whose policies, priorities and sheer persistence will shape the contours of our world to come, for better or for worse. Those, in turn, will be influenced by the actions and expectations of civil society, the mass of humanity recognized in the Preamble of the Charter as the peoples of the United Nations.

This session is especially important given that the Commission is now approaching the end of its three-

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year cycle. Despite the frustrations of the past, hopes still remain for achieving consensus on each agenda item, namely, "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons", "Elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade" and "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons".

We are all aware that the Commission has not been able to reach consensus on substantive issues for over a decade. Such difficulties, together with those shared by other parts of the disarmament machinery, led to the High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations on 24 September 2010. In his capacity as Chairperson of that Meeting, next year the Secretary-General will submit his report and observations to the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It is my hope and, I am sure, the hope of many delegations here today, that the report will be able to state that this year the Disarmament Commission reached consensus on the important issues on its agenda. The fate of that report and the work of the Commission remain, of course, in members' hands alone.

In conclusion, I would like to underscore the relevance of the Commission's current agenda to the long-standing goals of the United Nations with regard to weapons of mass destruction and conventional arms. While disarmament and the regulation of armaments are mentioned in the Charter, the United Nations has had to adapt to changing circumstances, which it has accomplished through various administrative reforms, the adoption of General Assembly resolutions, the negotiation of treaties in the Conference on Disarmament and the adoption of principles, guidelines and recommendations by the Disarmament Commission. Each of the issues on the Commission's agenda today constitutes part of a larger ambition — that of general and complete disarmament under effective international control, which has remained the United Nations ultimate objective in this entire field since the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament.

It is an impressive reaffirmation of the wisdom of the United Nations Charter that even in 1945, before the first test of a nuclear weapon, the world understood

the need to pursue simultaneously disarmament and arms control goals. The Commission's agenda reflects that understanding. I therefore hope that this will inspire new efforts to achieve consensus in the weeks ahead. Together, we have a solemn legacy to maintain and a new future to create for generations to come.

The Chair: I thank Mr. Duarte for his statement. At this stage, I would like to offer some remarks from the Chair's perspective.

As we grapple with the crisis of the present and confront future challenges, we should recognize that all our work during this session, as well as during previous sessions in this cycle, is an important part of the efforts to advance global disarmament and arms control norms and, thereby to strengthen international peace and security. I hope that the growing recognition throughout the world of the magnitude of disarmament and non-proliferation stakes, which has inspired calls for action in the recent past, will be conducive to a positive outcome of this year's substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, the last in the current cycle.

Unfortunately, the Commission's efforts to make progress have so far been unsuccessful. Indeed, obstacles and difficulties are inherent in trying to reach agreement through consensus. In the end, finding solutions to overcome such difficulties should be possible, considering the widespread agreement that exists on the importance of the issues before the Commission. I am confident that efforts will continue to be made towards that end. We should not allow such obstacles to undermine our collective efforts to find solutions that are acceptable to all parties.

If there is no consensus on the items on the agenda, the outcome of this session will only add to the Commission's unsatisfactory record of recent years. That should be avoided. Certainly, the Disarmament Commission does not function in a vacuum. Progress towards any consensus on recommendations by the Commission is dependent upon the space created for such progress by developments in the broader field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. That is particularly true of our efforts regarding the adoption of a declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade. We face a real opportunity to take stock of progress in the field of disarmament and to forge a vision for the next decade that transcends any specific issue or challenge.

I am confident that the members of the Commission will provide their contributions to fruitful discussions on the substantive issues at hand. I believe that there is potential to move forward in this disarmament forum and to reap the benefits of commonly agreed guidelines and norms. There is an urgent need to demonstrate the political will needed to restore the credibility of the disarmament machinery.

As the Commission knows, the former dictatorial regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq had an extensive programme for acquiring, manufacturing and developing all kinds of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), including nuclear weapons. Saddam wasted billions of dollars of the Iraqi people's wealth on such programmes. After Saddam's invasion of Kuwait, in 1990, the United Nations imposed sanctions on Iraq and forced the regime to dismantle those weapons programmes. Billions of dollars more were spent on dismantling those weapons.

Since the fall of Saddam's dictatorship, in 2003, the new Iraqi Government has pursued a policy of openness towards the international community, respecting the principles of international humanitarian law and implementing its international obligations, including those imposed because of the hostile policies of the former regime towards neighbouring countries. The new Iraqi Constitution states, in article 9, that Iraq will fulfil its international obligations regarding the non-proliferation, non-development and non-use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and that it will prohibit related equipment, materials, technologies and delivery systems for use in the development, manufacture and use of such weapons.

The new Iraq is different from the Iraq that existed before 2003. The United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission, which was tasked with verifying Iraq's compliance, was terminated by Security Council resolution 1762 (2007). Iraq has signed and joined many international conventions and treaties in the field of disarmament, such as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction; the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Production, Transfer and Development of Cluster Munitions; the Additional Protocols to the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement of the International Atomic Energy Agency; The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile

Proliferation; and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Following our cooperation in these fields, Iraq was elected a member of the Executive Board of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons for the period 2010-2012.

Organization of work

The Chair: Members of the Commission may recall that the Commission formally adopted its agenda (A/CN.10/L.65) at its organizational session on 28 March 2011. Therefore, the Commission is not going to take any action at this meeting other than to simply take note of document A/CN.10/L.65. Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Commission agrees to take note of that document.

It was so decided.

Election of other officers

The Chair: We shall now proceed to the election of the remaining members of the Bureau. As members will recall, the Commission has still to elect the Rapporteur and six Vice-Chairs, namely, one from the Group of African States, one from the Group of Asian States, two from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and two from the Group of Western European and other States.

I should like to inform the Commission that the Group of Asian States has nominated Mrs. Byrganym Aitimova of Kazakhstan for the post of Vice-Chair of the Commission.

I now give the floor to the representative of Liechtenstein.

Mr. Stamm (Liechtenstein): In my capacity as Chair of the Group of Western European and other States for the month of April, I would like to announce the candidatures for the position of Vice-Chair of Mr. Jean-Cédric Janssens de Bisthoven of Belgium and Mr. Francisco Javier Sanabria of Spain.

The Chair: I have been informed that consultations in the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States are still ongoing. We will take up the election of Vice-Chairs from that Group at a later stage.

I should like to inform the Commission that the Group of African States has nominated the

representative of Senegal as candidate for the post of Vice-Chair of the Commission, the representative of Nigeria as candidate for the post of Vice-Chair for the Working Group to discuss elements of the draft declaration and the representative of Benin as candidate for the post of Rapporteur of the Commission.

I shall now read out the names submitted thus far for Bureau positions. For the post of Vice-Chair, I have been informed of the candidacies of Mrs. Byrganym Aitimova of Kazakhstan, Mr. Jean-Cédric Janssens de Bisthoven of Belgium, Mr. Saliou Niang Dieng of Senegal and Mr. Francisco Javier Sanabria of Spain. Nigeria is to chair Working Group II, while Benin is to serve as Rapporteur. The names of those representatives will be communicated at a later date.

Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Commission agrees to elect those members of the Bureau.

It was so decided.

The Chair: I congratulate the members of the Bureau who were just elected to the positions of Vice-Chair and Rapporteur. I look forward to working with them to achieve the objectives of the Disarmament Commission.

As members are aware, there are three substantive items on the Commission's agenda for this last year of the current cycle, namely, "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons"; "Elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade"; and "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons".

At our organizational session on 28 March, in addition to the two existing Working Groups, we established a third Working Group to deal with practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. The only pressing issue at this point is the election of the Chairs of those three Groups. I have been informed that the regional groups are continuing their consultations regarding nominations of the Chairs of the two remaining Working Groups. I would appeal to them to complete that process as expeditiously as possible, in order to start meetings of the Groups as planned, on Wednesday, 6 April. I wish to remind delegations that

the third Group will start its work after the first and second Groups have finished theirs.

I would now like to draw the Commission's attention to the revised programme of work prepared by the Secretariat, which is contained in document A/CN.10/2011/CRP.1. As members may recall, some delegations proposed changes to the document at our organizational meeting. The current document reflects those changes. As members will note, we have allocated seven meetings for each Working Group on an equitable basis. Also, Working Groups I and II will hold their meetings during the first half of this session, to be followed by the meetings of Working Group III.

Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to take note of the programme of work contained in document A/CN.10/2011/CRP.1.

It was so decided.

General debate

The Chair: As we begin the general debate, I would like to urge delegations that have not yet done so to inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible, as we plan to conclude the general debate tomorrow at 6 p.m. I would also like to remind delegations that we will follow the established format for the length of statements, namely, 15 minutes for delegations speaking on behalf of groups and 10 minutes for delegations making statements in their national capacity.

Mr. Körösi (Hungary): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries of Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates of Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

First, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the 2011 session of the Disarmament Commission, as well as all the members of the Bureau. The EU looks forward to working closely with you to achieve a successful outcome to this session.

The EU recognizes the importance of the Commission as the specialized, deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery allowing for in-depth deliberations on

specific disarmament issues. The EU welcomes the work carried out last year by both Working Groups. We look forward to working closely with you, Mr. Chair, and with the Chairs of the Working Groups, to consider practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons before concluding the current three-year cycle.

The EU welcomes the renewed momentum in global disarmament and non-proliferation, as illustrated by, among other things, the successful 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the entry into force of the New START agreement, as well as important events in the field of conventional arms, such as the entry into force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. We reaffirm our commitment to treaty-based arms control and disarmament and underline the need to renew multilateral efforts and to strengthen and reactivate multilateral instruments. In that context, we aim to make the best possible use of the Commission.

Reinforcing the non-proliferation regime should be a key priority for all States in order to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. The proliferation of such materials to non-State actors is one of the greatest threats to our common security. The EU therefore is an active supporter of the vigorous implementation of Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1887 (2009). The EU is currently working on a new decision to provide financial assistance to facilitate this work.

For the EU, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and an important element in the responsible development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The EU therefore welcomes the adoption by consensus of the Final Document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, and is highly committed to the implementation of all the action plans related to the Treaty's three pillars.

The EU is also committed to the full implementation of the understandings reached at the NPT Review Conference concerning the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery in that region. As for the seminar in

support of the process leading to a zone in the Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery to be organized in 2011, the European Union is actively engaged in its preparation and calls upon all States in the region to participate in it in the most constructive spirit.

Universal adherence to, and the rigorous implementation of, all NPT obligations are key to international security. The Treaty's regime is particularly challenged by the nuclear proliferation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The EU deplores that Iran continues to fail to address serious concerns about the nature of its nuclear programme. Iran's refusal to fully cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and to implement the Additional Protocol, contrary to the relevant resolutions of the IAEA Board of Governors and the Security Council, precludes the resolution of outstanding issues, in particular those pointing to a possible military dimension. The IAEA therefore remains unable to conclude that all nuclear material in Iran is for peaceful activities and remains concerned about possible undisclosed activities, which might also be related to the development of a nuclear payload for a missile. The EU reiterates its commitment to seeking a comprehensive, long-term solution to the Iranian nuclear issue through dialogue and negotiations in accordance with Security Council 1929 (2010). The EU High Representative has continued her efforts to engage Iran in a phased approach of confidence-building but, so far, Iran has not shown readiness to take up this opportunity.

The EU highlights the indispensable role of the IAEA in verifying States' compliance with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations. The EU reiterates its call for the universal conclusion of comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols, which together form today's verification standard. The EU also stresses the key role of the Agency in ensuring the responsible development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in the best safety, security and non-proliferation conditions, by countries wishing to develop their capacities in this field. In this context, the European Union supports the further development and implementation of multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is of crucial importance to nuclear

disarmament and non-proliferation. The renewed political commitments to pursue ratifications of the CTBT, in particular by annex 2 States, and recent progress in the build-up of its verification regime give new impetus to our efforts to achieve the earliest possible entry into force of this key Treaty. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, we urge all States to abide by the moratorium and to refrain from any actions that are contrary to the obligations and provisions of the CTBT.

With regard to the Conference on Disarmament, the EU attaches great importance to the immediate commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, including verification provisions, on the basis of the mandate contained in document CD/1299. Pending the entry into force of such a treaty, we call upon all States concerned to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of such material. The adoption of the 2009 programme of work, contained in document CD/1864, demonstrated that the start of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty is within reach.

During its first special session devoted to disarmament, the General Assembly attached great importance to the participation of all States possessing nuclear weapons in the negotiating body that is now the Conference on Disarmament. The EU welcomed the High-level Meeting held in September 2010 aimed at the revitalization of the Conference on Disarmament. The EU stands ready to contribute to further efforts to ensure effective follow-up to the Meeting.

In this three-year cycle, the EU has underlined that the Commission should devote adequate attention to conventional weapons, including the full implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The EU is strongly committed to improving international and regional responses to the harmful and destabilizing effects of unregulated transfers of conventional weapons and their diversion to the illicit market. Thorough legislation in the area of transfers of conventional weapons is already in place in the EU, and is being implemented by all EU member States.

The EU strongly supports the concept of an international arms trade treaty and is actively

participating in and promoting the process leading towards its realization. The EU welcomes the positive results of the sessions of the Preparatory Committee held in New York in July 2010 and February and March 2011 ahead of the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, which is to meet in 2012 to elaborate a legally binding instrument on the highest possible common international standards for the transfer of conventional arms.

In addressing the challenges of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, the European Union remains committed to working with all Member States within the framework of the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The EU continues to consider this international instrument as the main multilateral framework to respond to challenges posed by the illicit trade in, and excessive accumulation of, small arms and light weapons.

In the run-up to the 2012 Programme of Action Review Conference, we look forward to participating in the discussions of the forthcoming open-ended meeting of governmental experts in May 2011. The EU believes that that meeting could be an opportunity to apply a pragmatic and results-driven approach to enhancing the implementation of the Programme of Action. In that regard, the marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons seems to be a pertinent and substantial issue to discuss.

We are also convinced that the time is ripe for a more strategic assessment of the efforts that the international community has made to address the risks posed by the illicit trade and excessive accumulation of small arms and light weapons. The 2012 Review Conference should provide the occasion for Member States to assess thoroughly the level of implementation of the Programme of Action, 11 years after its adoption, to consider its adequacy to respond to threats related to small arms and light weapons and to take the right decisions to further improve the Programme of Action and speed up its implementation.

In the view of the European Union, international cooperation continues to be a key element in ensuring the full implementation of relevant international, regional, subregional and national instruments aimed at preventing the illicit trade in, and excessive accumulation of, small arms and light weapons. Guided

by its 2005 small arms and light weapons strategy, the European Union continues to support third countries' efforts to tackle trafficking in small arms and light weapons. We assist third countries and regional organizations in their implementation of the Programme of Action and other relevant instruments, such as the International Instrument on Marking and Tracing and the United Nations Firearms Protocol. We also continue to work on the elaboration of innovative tools and practices to prevent the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons, in particular via air.

In our view, transparency in military matters, including international arms transfers and military spending, continues to be a major confidence-building measure that deserves further attention. The EU reiterates its strong support for the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations System for the Standardized Reporting of Military Expenditures. We encourage all Member States to contribute to the success of both instruments by regularly submitting their national reports. We are equally convinced that, in order to remain relevant, the Register of Conventional Arms should also include an additional category devoted to small arms and light weapons.

The European Union welcomes the substantial progress achieved in the universalization and implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction. The financial and political support provided by the European Union and its member States to mine action has been substantial. Our support has focused on the promotion of the universalization of the Convention and assistance to States parties in complying with their obligations, including stockpile destruction, clearing mined areas, risk education and assisting victims. The EU is committed to implementing the Cartagena Action Plan and is working on a specific draft decision in support of it.

The EU remains firmly committed to responding to the humanitarian problems caused by cluster munitions. The EU considers it essential to make strong commitments in this area that are likely to lead to concrete results on the ground vis-à-vis the victims of such weapons, and thus to have a true humanitarian impact.

Furthermore, the EU welcomes the adoption of the Vientiane Plan of Action 2010-2015 at the First Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which took place in the Lao People's Democratic Republic in November 2010.

The European Union remains firmly committed to preserving and developing the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), which constitutes an essential part of international humanitarian law. We look forward to the Fourth Review Conference in Geneva in November 2011. A successful Review Conference will review, clarify and strengthen the existing obligations and their implementation. In our view, it should make progress on, or bring to a conclusion, the issues currently under discussion. It should also set perspectives for useful future work.

In conclusion, Mr. Chair, we wish you every success in your endeavours and assure you of the complete support of European Union member States in this process.

Mr. Errázuriz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the members of the Rio Group. At the outset, the Rio Group wishes to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the 2011 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, as well as the other members of the Bureau. We would also like to express our gratitude to the 2010 Chairs of Working Groups I and II, namely, Mr. Paolo Cuculi of Italy and Mr. Johann Paschalis of South Africa, for their efforts to conclude their work. In the same vein, we wish the Chairs of Working Groups I, II and III every success at this session. We also welcome the participation of the High Representative for Disarmaments Affairs, Mr. Sergio Duarte, and thank him for his opening remarks.

The Rio Group reiterates its willingness to work constructively towards completing the complex tasks entrusted to the Commission. We hope that during the current session, the third and last of the three-year cycle for two of the substantive items, progress can be made that will make it possible to adopt specific recommendations.

The Rio Group reaffirms the role of the Disarmament Commission as the specialized, deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery that allows for in-depth deliberations on specific disarmament issues,

which lead in turn to the submission of specific recommendations to the General Assembly.

Regarding the item entitled "Recommendations for achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons", the Group reiterates its firm position in favour of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all their aspects, as well as its concern about the serious threat to humanity posed by the very existence of nuclear weapons and the slow progress towards their total elimination, which is the only absolute guarantee against the threat or use of such weapons.

The Rio Group, while welcoming a number of positive signals regarding nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, emphasizes the need for urgent and consistent actions aimed at the total elimination and legally binding prohibition of nuclear weapons within a specified time frame.

The Rio Group welcomes the holding of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in New York in May 2010, and takes note of the fact that it adopted a substantive Final Document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)). The Rio Group notes that, though imperfect, the Document represents an outcome that can be built upon and further enhanced in the future. In our view, the agreed plan for follow-on actions makes a positive contribution to the goal of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, serving as a basis for constructive engagement in seeking concrete results towards the goal of a world free from nuclear weapons.

The Rio Group reaffirms both the importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) — the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime — and the balance among its three pillars. We are fully committed to its universality and therefore urge States that have not yet done so to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States. We also call on States parties to the NPT to fully comply with all their obligations and to fulfil their commitments under the Treaty. We reaffirm the importance of not interpreting or implementing the Treaty on a selective basis.

The Rio Group urges the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil fully their nuclear disarmament obligations under article VI of the Treaty and to comply with their commitments thereunder, in particular the practical

steps towards nuclear disarmament agreed to at the 2000 NPT Review Conference and the action plan adopted at the Eighth Review Conference. We call on the nuclear-weapon States to expedite measures to that end.

The Rio Group reaffirms the inalienable right of developing countries to participate in the research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination. We also reaffirm that all parties to the Treaty should undertake to facilitate, and have the right to participate in, the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The Rio Group also emphasizes the importance of nuclear-weapon States irreversibly, transparently and verifiably reducing their nuclear arsenals with a view to their complete elimination within a specified time frame.

The Rio Group views the entry into force of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms as an important step in reducing their deployed nuclear arsenals. We look forward to its early implementation. Although the Treaty represents significant progress, the Group calls for additional substantial reductions, in particular with respect to non-deployed and non-strategic nuclear weapons. Furthermore, the Group calls on all nuclear-weapon States to take concrete, transparent, verifiable and irreversible steps to eliminate all types of nuclear weapons, which still number in the tens of thousands.

The members of the Rio Group belong to the region that established the first densely populated nuclear-weapon-free zone, under the Treaty of Tlatelolco of 1967. As States parties to the Treaty, we urge nuclear-weapon States to withdraw the interpretive statements made on accession to the Protocols of the Treaty. Similarly, the Rio Group renews its commitment to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in other parts of the world, and expresses its satisfaction that the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference supports the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in areas of the world where they do not yet exist, in particular the Middle East.

The Rio Group welcomes the convening of the Second Conference of States Parties and Signatories of Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, held at Headquarters on 30 April 2010. We recognize the contribution of that initiative to the strengthening of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

The Rio Group reaffirms the role of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament. The Rio Group deeply regrets that, despite the positive developments in 2009 and the efforts made in 2010 and 2011, the Conference on Disarmament has not been able to adopt a programme of work. The Rio Group urges all members of the Conference to demonstrate the political will necessary to ensure the start, without delay, of its substantive work through the adoption and implementation of a balanced and comprehensive programme of work that moves the nuclear disarmament agenda forward, including negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention, a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States, the prevention of an arms race in outer space and a multilateral and non-discriminatory treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

The Rio Group reiterates its position with regard to the complete cessation of all types of nuclear testing. We underscore the importance of all States maintaining a moratorium on all types of testing of nuclear weapons and all kinds of nuclear explosive devices. The Group stresses the importance of the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. In that connection, we welcome the declarations of some States listed in annex 2, in which they state their intention to take steps towards its ratification. We hope that they will soon become concrete actions. The Rio Group calls on all annex 2 States that have not yet done so to ratify the Treaty as a priority issue, as proof of their political will and commitment to peace and international security.

With regard to the item "Elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade", the Group believes that the fourth decade will have a positive role in mobilizing global efforts to respond to current and emerging challenges in the areas of disarmament, arms control, proliferation and international security. The Group also underscores the

importance of moving the international disarmament agenda forward, and believes that now is the time to work constructively on a road map leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

With regard to the third agenda item, entitled "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons", the Rio Group believes that such measures are an important instrument for international peace and security, as they complement efforts in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation. Our region has taken significant steps towards the implementation of confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. Such measures help to strengthen international peace and security because they are specifically intended to promote understanding, transparency and cooperation among States. We therefore believe it necessary to strengthen, improve and extend confidence-building measure at all levels. In that regard, it is worth recalling the relevant General Assembly resolutions, including resolution 63/57, which was adopted by consensus.

One objective of such resolutions is to strengthen the exchange of information on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. In that respect, the information voluntarily provided by States is electronically recorded in a database on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, and, in accordance with resolution 65/53, is available in the six languages of the United Nations.

The Rio Group stresses the important work being carried out by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the assistance that it provides to the countries of the region for the implementation of disarmament measures in various areas.

In conclusion, the Rio Group reaffirms its readiness to cooperate with you, Mr. Chair, and the members of the Bureau for the achievement of concrete results during this session. We call on all delegations to show the necessary will so as to achieve a good outcome leading to practical steps towards the common goal of a safer world.

Mr. Kleib (Indonesia): I am honoured to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Let me first congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of this year's session of the Disarmament Commission. I also congratulate the members of the Bureau on their election and the Chairs of the working groups on their assumption of their posts. The Movement is confident that, under your able leadership, there will be tangible advancement on the globally agreed agenda on disarmament and non-proliferation. We assure you, Sir, the members of the Bureau and the Chairs of the Working Groups of our full support. We look forward to working with all Member States.

We would like to also express our appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Jean-François Régis Zinsou of Benin, 2010 Chair of the Commission, and the previous Chairs of the Working Groups for their hard work. NAM welcomes the remarks by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. We very much appreciate his efforts in facilitating the realization of the Commission's aims.

Before I proceed, NAM would like to express its deep commiseration with the Government and people of Japan over the recent tragic double event of the earthquake and the tsunami. As the nation of Japan heals from those disasters, our sincere and heartfelt wishes remain with the victims of the disasters and the people of Japan.

While noting some positive international developments in the context of nuclear disarmament, NAM underscores that much more remains to be achieved to attain a world free of nuclear weapons. We stress our concern over the slow pace of progress towards nuclear disarmament, and emphasize the importance of accelerating progress towards the objective of nuclear disarmament.

The Movement reiterates its concern at the threat to humanity posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and by their possible use or threat of use. We urge States, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, to fulfil completely their pledges and obligations on nuclear disarmament in a transparent, irreversible and internationally verifiable manner, and on nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects.

NAM emphasizes its principled positions on nuclear disarmament, which remain its highest priority, and on the related issue of nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects, and stresses the importance of that fact that efforts aimed at nuclear non-proliferation should

be parallel to simultaneous efforts aimed at nuclear disarmament, both processes being mutually reinforcing, and the fact that all States should fulfil their respective obligations. The ultimate aim in the disarmament process is general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control in order to strengthen international peace and security.

NAM recalls that at the Sharm el-Sheikh summit held in July 2009, the NAM Heads of State and Government reaffirmed the Movement's longstanding position regarding the absolute validity of multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. In that regard, the Group reaffirms the relevance and centrality of the Disarmament Commission as the sole specialized and deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery, providing for an in-depth deliberation on specific disarmament issues, with the submission of concrete recommendations before the General Assembly. The Group also recalls the paramount importance and continued validity of the consensus outcome of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The work of the Commission has made contributions in the field of disarmament and arms control, as reflected in its numerous productive sessions, including when it was able to reach consensus on guidelines for establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones and for conventional arms control. The Disarmament Commission can be highly effective, especially in the field of nuclear disarmament, and we hope that work in that regard will be intensified with reinvigorated political will.

The Movement hopes that the agreed goals on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects will be fulfilled at the earliest. In this context, we see the deliberative function of the Commission becoming more important, given the need to make rapid advances towards the achievement of disarmament goals.

NAM underlines the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the only multilateral negotiating body on disarmament and reissues its call on the Conference to agree on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work by, *inter alia*, establishing an *ad hoc* committee on nuclear disarmament at the earliest and as the highest priority.

The Movement stresses the necessity to start negotiations in the Conference on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified framework of time, including a nuclear weapons convention. To that end, and to help prohibit the development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use and to provide for the destruction of all nuclear weapons, the NAM once again calls for an international conference at the earliest possible date.

We note that despite NAM's best efforts during the 2010 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, substantive progress could not be attained in Working Group I on recommendations for achieving the objective on nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, we note the constructive discussions held in the Working Group and expect that at this session the Commission will agree on concrete recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects.

We reaffirm the importance of the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and to bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

NAM reiterates that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, vigorous efforts should be made as a matter of priority for the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

NAM reaffirms the importance of the application of the principles of transparency, irreversibility and verifiability by nuclear-weapon States in all measures related to the fulfilment of their nuclear disarmament obligations. While noting the conclusions of the New START treaty, the NAM stresses that reductions in deployments and in operational status cannot substitute for irreversible cuts in and the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

NAM reaffirms the inalienable right of developing countries to develop research, production

and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, without discrimination. The NAM continues to note with concern that undue restrictions persist on exports to developing countries of material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.

The NAM States that are parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) emphasize once again that nothing in the Treaty shall be interpreted as affecting the inalienable right of all parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with articles I, II, III and IV of the Treaty. We stress that this right constitutes one of the fundamental objectives of the Treaty. In this connection, we confirm that each country's choices and decision in the field of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be respected without jeopardizing its policies or international cooperation agreements and arrangements for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and its fuel-cycle policies.

NAM stresses that all States need to pursue in good faith intensified multilateral negotiations, as agreed by consensus in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, to achieve general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

NAM stresses the significance of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), including by all nuclear-weapon States, which, *inter alia*, should contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament. The continued commitment of all State signatories, especially the nuclear-weapon States, to nuclear disarmament is essential if the objectives of the CTBT are to be fully realized.

In this context, NAM had submitted a concrete proposal to Working Group I of the Commission. The Movement hopes that its proposal will be duly taken into consideration, and, to that end, we are ready to engage in a constructive discussion.

The Movement notes that Working Group II, which is dealing with elements for a draft declaration for the fourth disarmament decade, did not manage to conclude its work during the 2010 session, although it had constructive substantive discussions. In order to arrive at the convergence of positions that is necessary for the Working Group to reach consensus

recommendations on the elements for a draft declaration for the fourth disarmament decade, the NAM urges all delegations to display the necessary political will and flexibility during the 2011 session of the Disarmament Commission. The Movement hopes for a comprehensive, balanced, concise, forward-looking and principle-based outcome to the Working Group's efforts at this session, and we pledge our full cooperation to that end.

NAM reaffirms its longstanding position on the urgent need to convene the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We are deeply concerned at the fact that that session has yet to be convened despite the efforts we have made for many years in this regard. NAM welcomes the overwhelming support of the General Assembly, which, in its resolution 65/66 of 8 December 2010, decided to convene an Open-ended Working Group. It is our aim that this Working Group be convened in accordance with the aforementioned resolution and that it should hold its organizational session at the earliest for the purpose of setting a date for its substantive sessions in 2011 and 2012, and submit a report on its work, including substantive recommendations, before the end of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

All members of the Commission should fulfil their disarmament obligations and prevent nuclear proliferation in all its aspects. In the effort to attain nuclear disarmament, international and regional approaches, and confidence-building measures complement one another. Wherever possible, these should be pursued simultaneously so as to promote regional and international peace and security. In this context, NAM stresses that nuclear disarmament, as the highest priority established by SSOD-I and as a multilateral legal obligation, should not be made conditional on confidence-building measures or other disarmament efforts.

The Movement also believes that the most effective way of preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction is through the total elimination of these weapons. We further underline that the threat posed by terrorists' acquiring weapons of mass destruction should be addressed within the framework of the United Nations and through international cooperation, consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and international law.

The Movement remains deeply concerned by the strategic defence doctrines of the nuclear-weapon States, including the NATO Alliance Strategic Concept, which not only sets out rationales for the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, but also maintains unjustifiable concepts of international security based on promoting and developing military alliances and nuclear deterrence policies. NAM stresses the importance of the reaffirmation by the nuclear-weapon States of their legal obligations and of their refraining from sharing nuclear weapons with other States under any kind of security arrangements, including in the framework of military alliances.

During the organizational session of the Disarmament Commission, NAM supported the establishment of Working Group III to deal with the agenda item on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, and hopes that progress will be made on this agenda item. In this regard, NAM reaffirms the sovereign rights of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms for their self-defence and security needs. We express our concern about unilateral coercive measures, and emphasize that no undue restriction should be placed on the transfer of such arms.

NAM recognizes the significant imbalance in the production and possession of and trade in conventional weapons between the industrialized and NAM countries, and calls for a significant reduction in the production and possession of and trade in conventional weapons by the industrialized States with a view to enhancing international and regional peace and security.

The NAM States parties to the NPT are concerned about the lack of concrete progress by the nuclear-weapon States in implementing their obligations under the Treaty and in the full implementation of the 13 practical steps, particularly the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, leading to complete nuclear disarmament. The NAM States parties to the NPT call on the nuclear-weapon States to implement their obligations and undertakings, as reaffirmed by successive NPT Review Conferences.

The NAM States Parties to the NPT commend the efforts of the President of the 2010 Review Conference

of the Parties to the NPT, and consider that the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions of the Conference represent an outcome that can be built upon and further enhanced in the near future in order to realize a world free from nuclear weapons.

The Movement reiterates its support for the establishment in the Middle East of a nuclear-weapon-free zone, in accordance with Security Council resolution 487 (1981), paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991), and the relevant General Assembly resolutions adopted by consensus. The unsafeguarded nuclear capabilities of Israel are a matter of serious concern with respect to regional and international peace and security. Pending the establishment of such a zone, NAM demands that Israel, the only country in the region that has neither joined the NPT nor declared its intention to do so, renounce possession of nuclear weapons, accede to the NPT without delay, and promptly place all its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The NAM State Parties to the NPT remain seriously concerned about the lack of progress in the implementation of the 1995 NPT Review Conference resolution on the Middle East. In that context, they welcome the adoption by consensus of a detailed plan of action on the implementation of 1995 NPT Review Conference resolution on the Middle East, included in the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, and call for its full implementation. Accordingly, they urge the Secretary General and the sponsors of the 1995 resolution, in consultation with the States of the region, to commence immediately necessary preparations to convene a conference in 2012, to be attended by all States of the Middle East, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

In closing, the Movement stresses the importance of displaying political will and working collaboratively to address international disarmament issues. We are fully committed to our constructive engagement to contributing to the success of the work of this very important session of the Disarmament Commission.

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): The Group of African States wishes to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairperson of this year's session of the United

Nations Disarmament Commission. I also congratulate the members of the Bureau on their elections and assure them of the Group's full cooperation.

We welcome the always relevant and timely remarks of the United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ambassador Sergio Duarte, and his useful contributions to discussions on disarmament. Also, on behalf the African Group, I want to express appreciation to the Chair of the 2010 session, Mr. Jean-Francis Régis Zinsou of Benin, as well as all previous Chairpersons of the Working Groups, for their remarkable contributions.

The Group stands by and commiserates with the good people of Japan on the tragic incidents of the recent earthquakes and tsunami, bearing in mind its numerous pains and attendant loss of lives. This further underscores the need for international solidarity.

The African Group aligns itself with the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement just delivered by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia, and would like to make the following comments.

The African Group underscores the unique and important position of the Disarmament Commission as the main deliberative body on disarmament in multilateral diplomacy, but regrets the lack of consensus on any substantive issue during its session of 2010. We call on all States Members of the United Nations to demonstrate sufficient political goodwill, the requisite flexibility and deep understanding with a view to achieving concrete recommendations on the issues on the agenda of Disarmament Commission.

Humankind continues to be confronted with the serious threat posed by nuclear weapons. The African Group calls for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, as provided for by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner. The African Group reaffirms that multilateral diplomatic negotiation, consistent with the provisions of the United Nations Charter and within the United Nations disarmament machinery, remains the most effective approach to achieving nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in order to safeguard and strengthen international peace and security.

Nuclear weapon States should implement in good faith all their obligations and commitments under the NPT and its review process, and desist from

developing new types of nuclear weapons. Non-nuclear-weapon States should be granted unconditional negative security assurances in the framework of a legally binding instrument, as a matter of urgency.

The Group remains convinced that the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in order to enforce a comprehensive ban on all forms of nuclear test explosions would be a concrete and meaningful step towards the realization of a systematic process to achieve nuclear disarmament. The African Group stresses the significance of achieving universal adherence to the CTBT, in particular by all nuclear weapon States, which would contribute to the achievement of nuclear disarmament.

Africa is committed to the NPT and reiterates the importance of achieving its universality once it enters into force. In this regard, the Group underlines the importance of all countries adhering to the NPT as non-nuclear weapon States.

The African Group considers the entry into force of nuclear-weapon-free zones, such as that established by the Treaty of Pelindaba, to be a valuable contribution to nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and international security. The African Group calls upon the nuclear-weapon States and other relevant States that have not done so to ratify the Treaty's Protocols without further delay in order to ensure its effectiveness.

In the same vein, the African Group reiterates its support for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, in accordance with the resolution adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of Parties to the NPT as well as relevant United Nations resolutions. In this regard, the African Group calls upon the Secretary-General, the three depository States of the NPT and all the United Nations Member States in the Middle East to support the implementation of plan of action agreed at the 2010 Review Conference. The Group further calls for the immediate commencement of necessary preparations to convene a conference in 2012, to be attended by all States in the Middle East, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

Africa has paid a heavy price for the effects of the illicit transfer, manufacture, acquisition and circulation of conventional weapons, in particular

small arms and light weapons. In this regard, the African Group reiterates the high importance it attaches to the effective implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Furthermore, the Group acknowledges the need to regulate the trade in and global movement of arms in a fair, balanced and universal manner. In this context, the Group recalls the relevant General Assembly resolutions on the arms trade treaty, and notes the ongoing process towards the discussion of relevant elements of such Treaty.

Finally, the African Group wishes to appeal for a sustained and meaningful dialogue as we begin substantive debates on major issues, and looks forward to fruitful discussions to achieve the desired constructive conclusion to the present cycle Disarmament Commission.

Mr. Goledzinowski (Australia): First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, and other bureau members on your election, and to express full confidence that the quality of the leadership we will have at this session will be similar to that we enjoyed under the Permanent Representative of Benin at last year's session. I pledge our delegation's strong cooperation with you.

The multilateral disarmament agenda is one of Australia's highest priorities. Disarmament has a national security and humanitarian imperative. To move the global disarmament agenda forward, we need ideas and common purpose, strong rules and norms applying to all players. Multilateral action is therefore key. The United Nations Disarmament Commission has an important role to play. It must reinforce work on long-standing arrangements, support recent achievements and undertakings, and provide encouragement and direction to areas of potential progress.

Australia is firmly committed to a world free of nuclear weapons. The success of last year's Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and in particular its consensus adoption of a plan of action that is unprecedented in its scope and balance across the NPT's three pillars, was a crucial milestone. For our part, Australia played an active and constructive role at the Review Conference. We worked hard to inject fresh thinking. With Japan, we prepared and

submitted a package of practical measures that fit into the final set of actions. We submitted, with New Zealand, a paper calling for greater transparency in reporting by nuclear weapon States.

We were pleased that the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament — a joint Australia-Japan initiative — also made what we thought and hoped others believed were thoughtful and practical contributions. We must now translate this collective commitment into action. The action plan adopted at the Review Conference is a road map against which we can assess progress as we look ahead to the next review cycle in 2015.

But we must move forward now. As one practical contribution following the Review Conference, Australia established with Japan a cross-regional non-proliferation and disarmament initiative. At the first ministerial meeting in September last year, ministers adopted a forward-looking statement to advance the outcomes of the Review Conference in practical ways. We now look forward to the next ministerial meeting, to be held shortly in Berlin, which we hope will announce new measures to achieve real progress on the ground.

If we are to achieve genuine and irreversible nuclear disarmament, it is essential to cap the amount of fissile material available for nuclear weapons. The timing negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) is essential. As a pragmatic contribution, Australia and Japan are hosting a series of expert side events in the margins of the Conference on Disarmament. These are intended to build confidence and momentum for the FMCT negotiations and to consider key issues that will need to be resolved in these negotiations. The Disarmament Commission must send a strong message of support to the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations on an FMCT without delay. Differences of opinion in the Conference should not prevent us from commencing negotiations, but the Conference is running out of time. If it is to fulfil its mandate, it simply cannot afford further inertia.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference underscored the importance of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. For many years, we have worked to garner universal support for it. Our Foreign Minister, Kevin Rudd, chaired the fifth CTBT

ministerial meeting in September last year, which helped to push forward commitments to advocating for the CTBT's entry into force. We urge all States yet to ratify to do so without delay, and we welcome recent positive progress made towards its entry into force.

We must give serious attention to halting the proliferation of conventional weapons. We have the opportunity to address that threat through the negotiation of a comprehensive, legally binding international arms trade treaty (ATT). We are pleased with the work of the United Nations-mandated Preparatory Committee to develop thinking on the ATT in the lead-up to formal treaty negotiations next year. We welcome the opportunity to have been a Friend of the Chair at last year's Preparatory Committee. It will be important to maintain this momentum and the spirit of consensus as we work towards 2012. Australia stands ready to assist in building capacity and consensus in support of the ATT. We have already worked with a broad range of partners in the Pacific, Africa and particularly the Caribbean and elsewhere, and will continue these efforts.

Addressing the scourge of small arms and light weapons is critical to the disarmament agenda. We are providing practical assistance to those States that have requested it to implement the United Nations United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in order to address the proliferation of these weapons. We are pleased to be providing around \$150,000 to the Scholarship Fund of the United Nations Development Programme for those delegations of developing countries that wish to attend the Meeting of Governmental Experts in May, and we are hosting workshops to help others implement the Programme of Action and prepare for future ATT.

For many years, Australia has taken a strong stand against landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war. These continue to cause significant human suffering and to hinder human economic development. Australia is the sixth-largest contributor to mine action. We have provided some \$175 million over the past 12 years for landmine clearance, rehabilitation and education in 17 countries. In 2009, we committed to a further \$100 million towards this goal, and this afternoon we will be pledging a further significant sum on top of that. We encourage all States to become parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling,

Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, and to implement comprehensively their humanitarian objectives.

Multilateralism has long been at the heart of Australia's foreign policy; so, too, have disarmament and arms control. We have worked assiduously over many years in multilateral forums such as this to achieve a broad range of disarmament and non-proliferation objectives. We look forward to engaging in constructive debate in the Disarmament Commission to further pursue these important goals.

Mr. Diallo (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): I associate Senegal with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Nigeria on behalf of the African group. Please except, Sir, my warmest congratulations on your election as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission. At the same time, I assure you of the full support and cooperation of my delegation.

I should also like to warmly thank the outgoing Chairman, Ambassador Jean-Francis Régis Zinsou of Benin, for his laudable efforts at the previous session to advance the work of the Disarmament Commission. I should also like to congratulate the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Sergio Duarte, on his cogent comments and his important work for disarmament.

In recent years, the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime has encountered many obstacles that are severely hampering the progress that Member States have a right to expect in this field. The stalemate in the disarmament forums must give rise to a serious multilateral diplomatic effort in order to provide a collective and effective response to the security challenges the world is facing. Indeed, unilateralism and the pursuit of purely national interests can lead only to distrust, suspicion, misunderstanding, defiance and confrontation. We must bear in mind the sound conviction that security is either global or it is nothing at all.

With the success of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), held in May 2010, and the conclusion of the New START agreement by the two major nuclear Powers, we have seen a few glimmers of hope. Other promising events were the convening of

the Security Council summit of 24 September 2009 (see S/PV.6191) and the High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations of 24 September 2010, organized by the Secretary-General, as well as the entry into force in August 2010 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. This new positive momentum has led to renewed enthusiasm for general and complete disarmament. There is no better moment to lay new grounds for even more substantive progress. To that end, we must pay the closest attention to the following points.

First, we must reaffirm the will to rid the world of nuclear weapons as a major objective that must enjoy the support of all States. Second, we must strengthen the NPT, including through its universalization. Third, the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation machinery must be completed as soon as possible through the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the negotiation and adoption of a binding instrument banning the production of fissile material and a nuclear weapons convention. Fourth, the nuclear-weapon States must agree on an irreversible universal, verifiable and more ambitious programme to reduce their arsenals, and grant non-nuclear-weapon States security assurances through a binding instrument.

Fifth, we must also encourage greater support for nuclear-weapon-free zones, which contribute decisively to strengthening confidence and stability. In that regard, we call on all actors to act in good faith for the proper implementation of the conclusions of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT concerning the convening in 2012 of a conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Sixth, we must also reaffirm the right of countries to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and ensure the effective and safe transfer of relevant technologies to States that honour their obligations under the NPT. That would require strengthening the authority and capacities of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Seven, we must ensure better control of conventional weapons. In that respect, we welcome the progress made at the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2012 United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty. We also eagerly await the

convening of a conventional weapons summit by the Security Council in line with which took place in 2009 on nuclear weapons.

Senegal also calls for the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons to become legally binding. We also seek the implementation of the Outcome Document (A/CONF.192/BMS/2010/3) of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

In conclusion, allow me to express the hope that all delegations will demonstrate imagination and flexibility so that we can finally adopt, at the outcome of this session, clear and effective recommendations leading to the implementation of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, a declaration of the 2010s as the second disarmament decade, and confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.

Mr. Kodama (Japan): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, and all the other members of the Bureau. The delegation of Japan looks forward to working with you and the members of the Bureau at this session.

Secondly, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Nigerian Ambassador Ogwu, representing the African Group, for her words of condolence, sympathy and support for the people and Government of Japan in response to the Pacific Ocean earthquake. The Japanese people, let me assure the Commission, will mobilize their wisdom, courage and hope to recover from these challenging circumstances. Through their collective efforts and with assistance from all over the world they will successfully overcome these trying times. On behalf of the people and the Government of Japan, I should like once again to express my deepest appreciation for the tremendous outpouring of cordial assistance and support from all over the world.

Since last year, we have witnessed significant progress in the area of nuclear disarmament and arms control. The 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) concluded here in New York with the unanimous adoption of a comprehensive and forward-

looking Final Document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) setting out an action plan. Japan also welcomes the entry into force of the New START treaty between the United States and Russia. These, among others, are significant accomplishments and a testament to the new enthusiasm for disarmament. Yet we still face ongoing disarmament and non-proliferation issues, such as the nuclear programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which compel us to maintain and intensify this momentum for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Japan believes that the newly established cross-regional initiative on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, initiated by Japan and Australia, is also contributing to maintaining and enhancing momentum in these fields. Japan is convinced that, once these endeavours begin to see steady progress, disarmament and non-proliferation will be comprehensively advanced and the 2010s will be a remarkable decade for these issues. In this regard, the declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade should outline the important principles in the broad areas of disarmament and non-proliferation in a concise and well balanced manner.

A practical approach and concrete measures should be taken in order to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons. This, I believe, is the shared goal of all Member States represented here today. General Assembly resolution 65/72, entitled "United action towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons", which Japan submitted to the Assembly last year and which was adopted with a record number of sponsors and overwhelming support, including from some nuclear-weapon States, bears witness to the high level of international support for this goal. Towards this end, Japan attaches great importance to the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). In this regard, we welcome the commitment made by the United States to pursue ratification of the Treaty and the announcement by Indonesia that it will initiate the ratification process. Japan hopes that the remaining States listed in annex 2 will soon follow suit and proceed to the early ratification of the Treaty.

Japan also considers negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) as the next logical and critical step to be undertaken after the CTBT for achieving this goal. We strongly call for the immediate commencement of negotiations in the Conference on

Disarmament in this regard. Japan and Australia recently co-hosted expert side events in Geneva for the purpose of advancing the substantive discussions on a FMCT.

Conventional weapons continue to cause widespread loss of life around the world. Japan places great importance on the role of the existing confidence-building mechanisms concerning conventional weapons within the framework of the United Nations, such as the Register of Conventional Arms and the instrument for reporting military expenditures.

Japan has long been actively engaged on the issue of small arms and light weapons, submitting a draft resolution on this important issue to the General Assembly almost every year since 1995 and jointly with Colombia and South Africa since 2001. This year, we will once again present a draft resolution that defines a path for the follow-up to the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

Moreover, as one of the original sponsors of the resolution on an arms trade treaty, Japan has consistently supported the negotiation of such a treaty as a way to ensure the responsible transfer of weaponry. It is essential that we enhance the current level of preparatory work in order to conclude an instrument by the end of 2012.

Despite the importance of the United Nations Disarmament Commission in the area of multilateral discussions on disarmament, the Commission has not been able to produce any substantive outcomes in recent years. This is especially regrettable in the light of its history of producing various useful guidelines and recommendations. As it is now in the third and final year of its three-year cycle of deliberations, the Commission must conduct this session's work over the next three weeks proactively so as to issue meaningful recommendations. We should all strive to adopt a draft declaration at an early stage and to generate renewed momentum towards the goals of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mrs. Dunlop (Brazil): I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to your important position and reaffirm the readiness of the Brazilian delegation to collaborate with you. I also take this opportunity to commend the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ambassador Sergio Duarte,

for his excellent work and in particular for his ability to bridge differences in pursuit of our common goal of promoting progress on the disarmament agenda.

Brazil fully associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Chile on behalf of the Rio Group.

Allow me once again to express our sorrow and condolences to the Japanese people for their suffering. Brazil reiterates its confidence in the prompt recovery of that country, with which we share so much in our society.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission, as a deliberative body with universal participation, has the important role of debating the most pressing issues on the disarmament agenda. In the past, it was able to produce guidelines and adopt recommendations that responded to the mandate given to it. Due to a lack of political will and to difficulties in bridging differences, this has not been the case for the past decade.

At this session of the Disarmament Commission, three issues will be discussed, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/86: recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons; elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade; and practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. Since this is the last session of the three-year cycle of work of the Commission, Brazil hopes that it can yield substantive results.

Nuclear weapons cannot be justified in the twenty-first century, if ever they could have been. The concept of nuclear deterrence, created during the long-gone period of the Cold War, has lost its strategic significance, as it is no longer crucial for military purposes. Politically and morally, it has become unsustainable.

Nuclear disarmament has gained some momentum in the last couple of years, with the ratification of the New START treaty and the positive outcome of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Brazil believes that the time has come to begin negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention that would prohibit those arms and lead to their irreversible, transparent and verifiable destruction, according to an agreed legal framework and specified

timelines. Such negotiations will surely call for extensive efforts, but the first step towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons must be taken.

In addition to supporting full negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention, Brazil favours some intermediate actions. Negative security assurances must be given to non-nuclear States. Unilateral declarations do not suffice. Instead, we need to negotiate a multilateral agreement on negative security assurances. The necessity of such a comprehensive agreement arises from, among other things, the fact that several protocols of nuclear-weapon-free zones were signed by nuclear-weapon States with reservations.

Brazil also welcomes the decision of the Eighth NPT Review Conference to encourage the establishment of new nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of freely negotiated agreements among the States of the region concerned. We would also like to draw attention to the important decision to hold a Conference in 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

Another important step towards nuclear disarmament would be the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a verifiable treaty to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, which must take into consideration existing stocks and prohibit future production. It is important that the Disarmament Commission support such measures.

This session of the Disarmament Commission will also discuss the elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade. In order to fulfil its mandate, the Commission should take into consideration the commitments made by nuclear-weapon States in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)). In Brazil's view, the declaration should reflect the priority that we all attach to nuclear disarmament. The total elimination of nuclear weapons must be a clear and unconditional goal. We emphasize the importance of the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty by States that have not yet done so.

With regard to the disarmament machinery, Brazil believes that the declaration should support the holding of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. It should be a broad review of

the machinery that was created by the first special session, where the United Nations should continue to support the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral body for negotiations on disarmament.

The declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade should also address relevant issues in the field of conventional weapons, such as the arms trade treaty and the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

In accordance with resolution 65/86, once the declaration has been concluded, the Disarmament Commission should consider the issue of practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. It is important to highlight that such measures aim to correct misperceptions and misunderstandings about military actions and policies that might otherwise lead to conflict. They may gradually foster stable political and diplomatic relations and reframe parties' ideas about their security needs. They may even encourage initiatives to identify shared security interests in a manner conducive to a better appreciation of the importance of effective disarmament.

Brazil supports the Register of Conventional Arms, the Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures and the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. An arms trade treaty would also contribute to confidence-building in the area of conventional arms. The Disarmament Commission should encourage more cooperation among military authorities and promote seminars with the participation of experts from various countries.

In conclusion, I wish to reassure you, Sir, of the readiness of my delegation to work with you and the members of the Bureau to ensure the successful outcome of this session.

Mr. Haroon (Pakistan): Let me congratulate you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau on your election, and to express our gratitude to Ambassador Sergio Duarte. Pakistan aligns itself with the statement made by my friend the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. There is a time limit, so I will not read out my entire speech, but only an abridged version, as certain matters need to be

elucidated here today as our long-hoped-for goals for peace and a just international order remain elusive.

In the area of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, to my mind, there have been several recent negative developments. Those include, first, the fact that nuclear-weapon States seem unready for a zero-nuclear-weapons option. Secondly, contrary to the rhetoric we have heard this morning, many, including nuclear-weapon States, are resisting the commencement of negotiations on nuclear disarmament in the Conference on Disarmament. Thirdly, there are blatant violations of national and international non-proliferation rules and obligations by the international community, including the pursuit of selectivity, exceptionalism, discrimination and double standards, guided by commercial and national strategic considerations. Fourthly, there is a widening gap between the major Powers and the defence capacity of smaller States due to the development of anti-ballistic-missile systems, the steady militarization of outer space and the build-up of conventional forces by major Powers. Lastly, there is a growing lack of credibility when it comes to nuclear security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States.

Nuclear disarmament is today a core issue around which all other security issues revolve. Multilateral deliberations on important platforms, such as the Commission, offer the wider international community the only mechanism to address the perceived threats posed to the international community's security and stability by nuclear weapons. Hence it is of great importance.

While some powerful nations assert that today's global environment is more favourable for progress towards nuclear disarmament and stress their own commitment to nuclear zero, they are surprisingly opposed to the Conference on Disarmament engaging in negotiations on this core issue. This contradiction is now a dilemma for this house. The total — and, I reiterate, total — elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee of durable peace and security for the international community.

In principle, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation must remain synonymous, because the international legitimacy of the goal of nuclear non-proliferation only gains recognition when it leads towards the greater goal of nuclear disarmament. But can the goals of non-proliferation be achieved while a

small, elite club continues to possess nuclear weapons indefinitely? Is the NPT meant to divide the world perpetually into States that possess nuclear weapons and those that do not? I do not think that was the principle upon which it was founded.

As we know, the Disarmament Commission was created at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I) to serve as a forum for all Member States to deliberate on major disarmament issues. Some dismissively scoff that the Commission has not lived up to its potential role. Their motives are clear. They deliberately lower the Commission's relevance. Is that a failure of the disarmament machinery or is it our own bleak failure of political will to promote the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda?

The current session of the Commission has three items on its agenda, which need to be discussed. We hope that the Commission will be able to reconcile the differences in perspectives, approaches and modalities among Member States while deliberating on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues. We also expect that the Disarmament Commission will be able to revive prospects for effective nuclear and conventional disarmament and its meaningful contribution to international and regional peace and security.

For the sake of our international brotherhood, the issue of negative security assurances is an integral component of the debate on disarmament and non-proliferation. The unattended demand for such security assurances has been on the international arms control and disarmament agenda since the 1960s, without tangible result. We hope that the Disarmament Commission will now add its voice in underscoring the urgency of negotiations on this important subject.

Space has become an imperative, not an option. The militarization and weaponization of space must be prevented, or its ability to destroy planet Earth will be the last battle. The proposals made by the Russian Federation and China provide a good basis to start work on this issue in the Conference on Disarmament.

We also share the global concern with regard to the unbridled proliferation of ballistic missiles. To avert it, Pakistan calls for enhanced efforts to conclude a comprehensive, non-discriminatory and universally negotiated treaty within the United Nations system covering all aspects of missiles.

Pakistan's views on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) have been clearly articulated and are well known. Let me reaffirm that no State can be expected to refute its credible threat perceptions and engage in disarmament, arms control or non-proliferation negotiations if the very initiation of such negotiations undermine its basic and core security interests. For that obvious reason, the Conference on Disarmament, as part of the international disarmament machinery, works on the basis of consensus, which aims to ensure the equal security of all States. That is a principle that we espouse.

Having said that, let me highlight that the present focus on an FMCT follows a regular pattern of negotiating only those agreements that do not undermine or compromise the security interests of certain powerful States. We observe a similar pattern when it comes to the Biological Weapons Convention, Chemical Weapons Convention and even the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Let me therefore suggest to the Commission that, only after possessing vast numbers of nuclear weapons, were the major Powers convinced of the need to make biological and chemical-weapon systems internationally superfluous and redundant. In the case of CTBT, only after carrying out a sufficient number of nuclear tests did it dawn upon them that testing was unnecessary. It seems that an inequitable principle has been achieved. What is mine is mine; for others it is not necessary.

The same is the case with the FMCT. Having developed huge stockpiles of nuclear weapons and stocks of fissile material, the major Powers are ready to conclude a treaty that will only ban the future production of fissile material. For a fissile material treaty to genuinely advance the goals of disarmament and non-proliferation, it should not just ban future production bilaterally but also provide for the reduction of stocks multilaterally and take a broader, credible approach to the issues of the definition, scope and verification of fissile materials. That has not been done.

At the same time, let me reiterate that pending agreement on negotiating an FMCT, the Conference on Disarmament should begin substantive work, including negotiations on nuclear disarmament and a treaty on negative security assurances. Those are items on which the vast majority of the membership of the United Nations agrees that legally binding multilateral treaties should be concluded at the earliest possible time. We

hope that deliberations on the second item on the Commission's agenda will help to achieve a comprehensive, balanced, forward-looking and principle-based outcome.

While international attention is focused on the need to control weapons of mass destruction, the trade and military expenditures in conventional weapons continue to rise. In 1978, SSOD-I characterized global military expenditure as a colossal waste of resources. In the past 10 years, such expenditures have multiplied so many times over that we can only call it an even worse colossal waste of resources. Ironically, the weapons that fuel conflicts are not manufactured in zones of war, but in the havens that enjoy the greatest peace. A further complicating factor is the development of advanced conventional weapons with lethality approaching that of weapons of mass destruction.

In view of those disturbing trends, it is now imperative to pursue conventional arms control, even at the lowest possible levels of armaments and military forces, in order to promote peace and discourage huge collateral damage in the form of human lives. However, all conventional arms control efforts must be pursued verifiably in both the regional and subregional contexts, as most threat perceptions arise mainly in contiguous States and regions.

The General Assembly has regularly adopted a resolution entitled "Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels". That is a good sign. Those resolutions request the Conference on Disarmament to consider formulating the principles that can serve as a framework for regional agreements on conventional arms control. The General Assembly also annually adopts a consensus resolution entitled "Confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context". We hope that the Disarmament Commission will draw on those resolutions in preparing recommendations on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.

In conclusion, only by reviving the level of commitment of the international community that led to SSOD-I and by giving due importance to the various facets of the international security agenda will we be able to help realize the shared objectives of disarmament and non-proliferation in both the nuclear and the conventional fields. Pakistan strongly supports the call of the 119 members of the Non-Aligned Movement to convene the fourth special session of the

General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which would evolve a global consensus on all of those issues.

Mr. Kamau (Kenya): I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of this session of the Disarmament Commission. My delegation assures you of its full cooperation. At the outset, let me associate myself with the statement made by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group and by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. I daresay that I might also associate myself with some of the sentiments expressed by my Pakistani colleague.

The Disarmament Commission, as the sole deliberative body of the disarmament machinery, has tremendous potential to advance multilateral negotiations on disarmament issues. Last year's session of the Disarmament Commission gave delegations space and time to undertake intensive deliberations, albeit without reaching a common agreement on anything of real substance. However, that should not lead us to despair, but rather give us the resolve to soldier on in the current session with the aim of making progress. Members need to move beyond seemingly intractable procedural matters that eventually prevent discussion and agreement on substantive issues.

In that regard, my delegation would like to emphasize several points. On nuclear disarmament, Kenya recognizes that nuclear weapons still represent the greatest threat to humanity and therefore calls for the total elimination of nuclear weapons as the surest guarantee of saving mankind from the effects of such weapons.

My country has always held the belief that multilateral engagement, under the provisions of the United Nations Charter, remains the most effective means of achieving credible universal nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation so as to safeguard and strengthen international peace and security.

We urge nuclear-weapon States to exercise due diligence in implementing all of their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and other international treaties, and to desist from developing new types of nuclear weapons. We also encourage the international community to continue to strive towards the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Kenya salutes the entry into force of the regional nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties, including the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty. We call on all African States that have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty to do so urgently.

Kenya calls on all Member States to demonstrate the necessary political will and cooperation so that we may begin to see movement towards fulfilling the concrete recommendations in the field of disarmament and international peace and security that all of us have been pursuing for decades.

Concerning conventional weapons, the illicit trade and proliferation of small arms and light weapons continues to preoccupy my country and our entire region, as it has a negative effect on security and development. In that context, Kenya is a strong supporter of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Kenya has also consistently supported the search for a legally binding arms trade treaty to govern arms transfers so as to ensure that legitimately traded arms do not end up on the illicit market.

In that regard, we are pleased that the international community has agreed that international action is needed to address the unregulated trade in conventional weapons. Kenya strongly supports the convening of the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, to be held in 2012. We note with satisfaction the positive work undertaken in the two most recent meetings of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference and look forward to meaningful deliberations during its forthcoming meetings.

Finally, taking a cue from last year's session, where members held discussions in an atmosphere of mutual respect and tolerance, we appeal for the same spirit to prevail during the current session so that it will be possible to move forward with our important task.

We realize that the issues involved are extremely complex and cannot be divorced from political realities. However, we have no alternative but to rededicate ourselves to facing those enormous challenges in a bid to advance the disarmament agenda.

Mr. Momen (Bangladesh): Let me begin by congratulating you, Mr. Chair, and the Bureau on your well-deserved elections. I am confident that your able leadership and wisdom will guide our work in the

Commission to fruition. I also thank the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs for his important statement.

Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Given the current encouraging developments in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, this session's work could be critical in guiding and advancing our disarmament agenda. The necessary political will seems to be making a difference. We are encouraged by the pronouncements emanating from different capitals on their promises to substantively advance the nuclear disarmament agenda. As President of the first session of the Conference on Disarmament in 2010, Bangladesh tried its best to bring all parties together.

Bangladesh never had any illusion about the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remaining the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime or the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Security Council has reconfirmed that. Bangladesh reiterates its call, as also reflected in Security Council resolution 1887 (2009), on States that are not parties to the NPT to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States so as to achieve its universality at an early date and, pending their accession to the Treaty, to adhere to its terms.

Bangladesh calls for adopting a balanced approach in addressing the three pillars of the NPT. Those are the nuclear disarmament of countries currently possessing nuclear weapons, non-proliferation in countries not yet in possession and the peaceful use of nuclear energy by all. Bangladesh also reiterates its call on all States, in particular the remaining annex 2 nations, to refrain from conducting nuclear-test explosions and to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). I am pleased to report that Bangladesh is the first South Asian annex 2 nation to join the CTBT. We are convinced that the universalization and early entry into force of the CTBT is a critical building block for a nuclear-free world.

Bangladesh also calls on the parties to the NPT, pursuant to article VI of the Treaty, to undertake to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to nuclear arms and disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under

strict and effective international control. Bangladesh further calls on all other States to join in that endeavour.

Bangladesh supports the Secretary-General's five-point proposal on nuclear disarmament. I am happy to note that, last year, the Bangladeshi Parliament unanimously passed a resolution supporting nuclear and general disarmament and calling for a nuclear-weapons convention. The resolution further urged all the world's Governments and national parliaments to support the United Nations initiative. The resolution reflected Bangladesh's policy in favour of a world free of nuclear weapons. It reiterated our nation's full support for nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. More important, the resolution also called upon countries with nuclear-weapon capacities to divert the \$100 billion they spend annually on nuclear weapons programmes to climate change adaptation programmes and to the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

Bangladesh, a country constitutionally committed to general and complete disarmament, enjoys an impeccable record in disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear and conventional weapons. We are a party to almost all United Nations disarmament and non-proliferation instruments and make endeavours, within our limited resources, towards their full implementation at the national, regional and international levels.

We would like to emphasize here that while we support all non-discriminatory efforts towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Bangladesh recognizes the inalienable right of the parties to the NPT, as stipulated in article IV of the Treaty, to develop, research, production and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with articles I and II of the Treaty. Bangladesh, for example, has consciously and unconditionally opted to remain non-nuclear. We are currently working on making good use of the NPT provision on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy to improve the living standard of our people, under the guidance of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Bangladesh has also concluded a safeguards agreement with the IAEA, including the additional protocol, as part of our commitment to non-proliferation.

While we must continue to work on eliminating weapons of mass destruction from the face of planet Earth, we must not lose sight of the perennial threats posed by the proliferation of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons. Bangladesh lends its support to the global effort being made to conclude an arms trade treaty to ensure the transparent transfer of conventional weapons.

Bangladesh also calls for putting an end to the use of anti-personnel landmines. Many civilians, including children and women, have fallen victim to landmines in conflict and post-conflict situations. Bangladesh has fulfilled its obligations under the

Landmine Convention by destroying its stockpile. We call upon all States that have not yet done so to accede to the Ottawa Convention. Assistance should also be extended in mine-clearance operations and for the rehabilitation of victims in affected countries.

Finally, we have good reason to be more hopeful than ever about making progress in the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda. This can indeed be a time for looking beyond what has been perceived to be achievable all these years and to work for an ambitious disarmament agenda to make the planet a safer place for all of us and, more important, for future generations.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.